

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 11128 01 OF 02 281038Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 H-01 INR-07 PM-05 IO-13

NSC-05 CIAE-00 /059 W

-----021541 281147Z /12

P 271522Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 185

SECDEF WASHDC/ASD/ISA PRIORITY

INFO CINCEUR PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 11128

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR MASS IS US

SUBJ: WEIZMAN VISIT TO WASHINGTON

REF: STATE 299400

1. THE OPPORTUNITY OF A MEETING OF ASD/ISA MCGIFFERT AND
DASD JANKA WITH MOD WEIZMAN PROVIDED VALUABLE INSIGHTS INTO
THE CURRENT VIEWS OF THE MOD ON HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT.

2. MR WEIZMAN BEGAN THE MEETING BY SAYING HE IS DELIGHTED
WITH THE PEACE MOVEMENTS, SADAT'S VISIT AND THE RESPONSE
ISRAEL AND THE US HAVE GIVEN TO SADAT'S INITIATIVE FOR
PEACE. HOWEVER, HE IS A MILITARY MAN AND MUST PREPARE
FOR THE WORST; THAT HE MUST BUILD ON WHAT THE THREAT IS
TODAY, AND WHAT IT MIGHT BE TOMORROW.

3. THE ASD/ISA SAID HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING MR
WEIZMAN IN WASHINGTON AND ASKED WHAT WEIZMAN WOULD CONSIDER
A SUCCESSFUL TRIP. MOD REPLIED TO JUST LOOK AT THE NEWS-
PAPERS (REFERRING TO RECENT ARTICLES ON MATMON C). IF
WE GET EVERHTHING "THEY" SAY WE REQUESTED HE WOULD BE
VERY HAPPY. OF COURSE, CERTAIN DEFENSE ITEMS ARE
GOING TO BE CHANGED BASED ON WHAT DEVELOPS FROM

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TEL AV 11128 01 OF 02 281038Z

SADAT'S MOVE, AND PERHAPS EVEN BEFORE HIS TRIP TO
WASHINGTON. ISRAEL IS DEFINITELY GOING TO HAVE TO
TAKE SOME IMPORTANT STEPS IN THE SINAI. IF ISRAEL
GIVES UP LAND IN THE SINAI AND POSSIBLY RETURNS TO
THE ENCLAVE FROM WHICH THEY WERE FORCED TO GO TO WAR
IN 1967, WHATS GOING TO BE THE COMPENSATION FOR ISRAEL -
WEAPONS, LISTENING POINTS, OBSERVATION POINTS? IN ANY

EVENT, MATMON C HAS TO BE CONSIDERED A PART OF THOSE COMPENSATIONS. EVEN IF PEACE SHOULD COME, HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE MATMON C REALIZED IN SOME FORM; AND IT SHOULD BE BASED ON THE NEW SITUATION IN THE SINAI. PRESSED FOR HIS CURRENT PRIORITIES, WEIZMAN QUICKLY TICKED OFF: AIRPLANES (F-15; F-16), TANKS, ARTILLERY (M-109), APC'S, AMMUNITION, IMPROVED FIRE CONTROL SYSTEMS FOR THE TANKS AND FLIR.

4. ASD POSED THE FOLLOWING: IF SADAT'S PEACE MOVES ARE SUCCESSFUL, IT IS VERY MUCH TO EGYPT'S ADVANTAGE TO REDUCE ITS WEAPONRY. WHAT WILL ISRAEL'S RESPONSE TO THAT BE? MOD RESPONDED THERE WOULD BE NO IMMEDIATE CHANGE, IN REQUIREMENTS. IF NOTHING COMES OUT OF CAIRO WE ARE GOING TO BE IN MORE OF A DEFENSE BIND AND MATMON C WILL HAVE TO BE CHANGED. SHOULD PEACE NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE AND PEACE BE REALIZED, IT WILL HAVE TO BE A CONTROLLED PEACE FOR TEN - FIFTEEN YEARS UNTIL THE LEVEL OF TRUST IS BUILT UP.

5. IN DISCUSSING FUTURE REQUIREMENTS WEIZMAN POINTED OUT THAT ISRAEL IS APPROACHING A SITUATION WHERE THERE ARE 7000 ENEMY TANKS VERSUS THE GOI'S 3000. "WHAT AM I GOING TO FIGHT WITH IN THE FUTURE WHEN I AM FACING T-72'S, MIG 23'S, AND 25'S. WILL WE BE FLYING OUR OLD F-4'S AND USING CENTURIONS, HALF TRACKS AND SHERMANS?" IN TERMS OF PRIORITY TO MEET THIS MAJOR THREAT, WEIZMAN POINTED OUT THE FIRST AND FOREMOST IS TO CONTINUOUSLY
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TEL AV 11128 01 OF 02 281038Z

IMPROVE THE QUALITATIVE SUPERIORITY. IN REVIEWING THE PREVIOUS WARS, HE SAID WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN BETTER IN TERMS OF QUALITY, TYPE OF WEAPONRY, MANEUVERABILITY AND THE HUMAN BEING, WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUALITY. WHEN HE REFERRED TO QUALITY HE WAS TALKING ABOUT TECHNOLOGY. HE STATED THE MAIN SOURCE OF THIS TECHNOLOGY COMES FROM THE US, AND "IT HAS TO BE MAINTAINED IF WE ARE GOING TO SURVIVE." WEIZMAN STATED THAT HE KNEW THAT THERE WERE SOME ITEMS OR TECHNOLOGIES THAT WE WERE NOT PROVIDING TO ANYONE OR THAT WE MIGHT NOT BE WILLING TO RELEASE IMMEDIATELY. HOWEVER, HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THEIR REQUIREMENTS AND OUR RESTRICTIONS; HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT THE NECESSARY CLARIFICATION AND A BASIS OF COOPERATION COULD BE WORKED OUT. COMMENT: WEIZMAN WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A DETAILED EXAMINATION OF THIS SUBJECT WITH DR. PERRY DURING HIS JANUARY VISIT. HOWEVER, SINCE NO FINAL DECISIONS WILL BE MADE DURING THE PERRY VISIT, WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT DR. PERRY BE INCLUDED IN WEIZMAN'S WASHINGTON SCHEDULE SO THAT HE CAN PERSONALLY COMMUNICATE THE US RESPONSE TO THE ISRAELI REQUEST FOR TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER.

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 11128 02 OF 02 281042Z
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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 11128

6. WEIZMAN INCLUDED THE KFIR IN THE DISCUSSION, POINTING OUT THAT AIRCRAFT, COST ABOUT 4.5 TO 5 MILLION. TODAY'S COSTS OF HIGH PERFORMANCE AIRCRAFT MAKE THE KFIR CHEAP. IN TERMS OF LOOKING FOR A REPLACEMENT OR A POSSIBLE REPLACEMENT FOR THE A-4, IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, THE KFIR IS AN IDEAL CHOICE. THE PRODUCTION OF THE KFIR IN ISRAEL IS A GOOD THING. STOPPING THE PRODUCTION LINE WOULD THROW THE ISRAELI AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY BACK TO WHERE IT WAS TEN YEARS AGO. CONTINUED PRODUCTION IS GOOD FOR THE US TOO, BECAUSE THE KFIR IS NOT AN ADVANCED STATE OF THE ART AIRCRAFT WHICH COULD TILT THE BALANCE OF POWER IN THE MIDDLE EAST. KFIR PRODUCTION UP TO NOW HAS BEEN 80 AIRCRAFT WITH 30-40 MORE IN THE FACTORY AT PRESENT. ISRAEL IS UNABLE TO BUDGET FOR MORE KFIR'S SINCE THERE HAS BEEN PRECEDENCE IN TERMS OF THE US SUPPORT FOR TANK DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION, "I BELIEVE YOU CAN LIVE WITH THE KFIR BEING THE REPLACEMENT FOR THE A-4, AND WITH ISRAEL DOING THE PRODUCTION ON IT." WEIZMAN INDICATED HIS INTENT TO BRING UP THE QUESTION OF THE US PROVIDING DOLLAR SUPPORT FOR PRODUCTION OF THE KFIR DURING HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON. ASD INDICATED THAT HE SHOULD NOT EXPECT A FAVORABLE RESPONSE, BUT THAT HE COULD RAISE THE ISSUE IF HE SO DESIRED.

7. WEIZMAN THEN SHIFTED TO A DISCUSSION OF HOW HE SAW HIS JOB AS MINISTER OF DEFENSE. "DURING MY TRIP TO WASHINGTON I WANT TO BE ABLE TO SIT DOWN AND PICK THE BRAINS OF

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TEL AV 11128 02 OF 02 281042Z

KEY MILITARY PEOPLE AS TO WHAT THEY SEE THE MILITARY WORLD

COMING TO IN TERMS OF WHERE ITS GOING TO BE IN THE 80'S, 90'S AND EARLY 21ST CENTURY." HE SAID HE VIEWED HIS JOB AS TRYING TO PLAN FOR THE NEXT 10-20 YEARS. WHAT IS GOING TO BE THE BATTLEGROUND FOR 1990-2000? "MY CONCERN IS THE OVERALL MILITARY PICTURE, WITHOUT THE MUSHROOM - THAT IS WHAT I AM INTERESTED IN."

8. IN CLOSING, THE MOD MADE THIS STATEMENT: "WHEN I FOUGHT MY FIRST BATTLE, I TOLD MY WIFE THAT I DID IT BECAUSE I DID NOT WANT MY SON TO FIGHT THE NEXT ONE. THEN WHEN I WENT TO THE SINAI IN 1973 TO VISIT MY SON, I SAID, 'WHERE DID I GO WRONG'. IN VIEWING MY JOB RIGHT NOW, I WANT TO MAKE DARN SURE THAT SOMEONE DOWN THE ROAD EIGHTEEN YEARS FROM NOW DOES NOT LOOK BACK ON MY TIME WHEN I WAS THE MOD AND SAY "HE DID SOMETHING WRONG, HE DID NOT PREPARE FOR THE NEXT YEARS. HE DID NOT DO HIS BEST."

9. COMMENT: THERE IS OBVIOUSLY SOME AMBIVALENCE AND UNCERTAINTY AMONG THE ISRAELIS AS TO THE IMPACT ON THEIR FUTURE SECURITY OF AGREEMENTS NOW BEING DISCUSSED AND NEGOTIATED. IN GENERAL WITHIN THE MOD THERE IS AN INCLINATION TO PLAN FOR THE WORST, A RELUCTANCE TO ACKNOWLEDGE ANY POSSIBILITY OF A REDUCTION IN REQUIREMENTS AND YET ACCEPTANCE OF THE FACT THAT REQUIREMENTS WILL PROBABLY CHANGE. IMMEDIATE PRIORITY REQUIREMENTS APPEAR DEFINITE AND CLEAR CUT. IN SO FAR AS THE FUTURE IS CONCERNED, THERE IS A DESIRE TO IDENTIFY AND ESTABLISH THE DIRECTION THAT SHOULD BE FOLLOWED. ASD MCGIFFERT COMMITTED HIMSELF TO SEEKING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR WEIZMAN TO MEET WITH GRNERAL BROWN, CJCS, AND GENERAL JONES, CSAF, DURING HIS VISIT FOR CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSIONS. (PLEASE CHECK IF THIS HAS BEEN DONE.)

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SECRET

PAGE 03 TEL AV 11128 02 OF 02 281042Z

10. MEETING TOOK PLACE ON 14 DEC 77, SORRY FOR THE DELAY IN TRANSMITTING THIS MEMCON. LEWIS

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